

# NEVER SHAKE A BABY



**KEEPING KIDS SAFE...**

The Blue Ribbon Campaign

**OUR HOTLINE IS A HELP LINE, TOO.**  
**703-324-7400; TTY 711**

"I didn't know shaking a baby could hurt!"

**It is true.** Jerking or violently shaking a baby is equal to dropping a baby head-first onto a hard surface from a height of 10 feet. It could cause permanent brain damage, blindness or, in some cases, even death.

**Why babies cry.** All healthy babies cry. Babies cry when they are tired, hungry, uncomfortable or sick. Babies also cry when they are bored, over-stimulated or lonely.

**What you can do.** It is important to respond quickly when a baby cries. If your baby cries and is not wet, hungry, or running a fever, try these ways to comfort:

- Hold your baby close to your body, on your shoulder, or supported in your arms. (Remember to support the baby's head and back.)
- Gently stroke your baby's back, arms, legs, and feet using long strokes.
- Wrap your baby securely in a blanket, leaving his head and hands free.
- Lay your baby in his crib, on his back, to allow baby to calm himself. Make sure you are within sight and sound of your baby.

**Watch your baby's response.** Some infants do not respond well to holding, stroking or being securely wrapped in a blanket. If your baby does not respond well, then try these additional ways to comfort:

- Sing or talk to your baby in a quiet, soothing voice.
- Try to interest your baby with a rattle or toy.
- Turn on some soothing (soft) music.

**If your baby continues to cry, talk to your family doctor or pediatrician.** There may be a medical condition that may be causing your baby to cry.

**Need more help? Call the DFS Child Protective Services Hotline/Helpline at 703-324-7400; TTY 711, or Prevent Child Abuse Virginia at 1-800-244-5373.**

**Develop a support system.**

- Don't be afraid to ask friends and relatives for help.
- Take a parenting class.
- Join a parent support group.



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